

STAKE SENIOR MISSIONARY SPECIALISTS AND OTHER MISSIONARY-SUPPORT PERSONS

This memo suggests how a Stake President's efforts regarding missionary work performed by the senior members of his stake can be supported by others. Some of a Stake President's responsibilities and authority related to missionary work can be delegated. We will begin with a definition of terms and a brief summary of the missionary application process.

A. Translating Church Vernacular. To start, let's review the vocabulary that is unique to missionary work among "senior" members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the "Church").¹

A.1. Senior Missionary. A "Senior Missionary" serves full time, usually away from home. Senior Missionaries are called by the President of the Church and serve under the direction of a Mission President.

A.2. Senior Service Missionary. "Senior Service Missionaries" serve part-time while living at home. Senior Service Missionaries are called by their Stake Presidents and serve under the direction of the "Operation Manager" of a Church "Operation" that is in their local area or online.

A.3. "Senior". For Senior Missionaries, the term "senior" refers to married couples and single sisters who are at least 40 years old and have no dependent children at home. For Senior Service Missionaries, the term "senior" refers to any Church member who is at least 26 years old.

A.4. Operation; Operation Manager. An "Operation" is a Church organization that uses Senior Service Missionaries, such as FamilySearch, Family Services (including Addiction Recovery Services), the Bishops' Storehouse, Deseret Industries, Temples, Mission Offices, BYU-Pathway, Employment Offices, and Community Resource Support operations, among others. An "Operation Manager" is the person who manages a Church Operation.

A.5. Missionary Websites. For seniors, there are several key Church missionary-related websites:

(a) SMW. <https://seniormissionary.churchofjesuschrist.org> is the Church's official Senior Missionary Website.

(b) Recommendation Application Site. <https://missionaryrecommendations.churchofjesuschrist.org/> is used to fill in and update missionary applications.

(c) MRS. <https://mrs-leadership.churchofjesuschrist.org/> is the online Missionary Recommendation System that is used by Bishops and Stake Presidents. (This is also accessible through the Leadership and Clerk Resources site.)

(d) SMMS. <https://servicemissionary.churchofjesuschrist.org/> is the Service Missionary Management System that is used by Operation Managers, Stake Presidents, and Senior Missionary Coordinators with respect to the assignments of Senior Service Missionaries.

A.6. Senior Missionary Coordinators. Senior Missionary Coordinators are

¹ See Chapter 24 in the Church's General Handbook (<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/general-handbook/title-page?lang=eng>) for more details about missionary service. See also the Senior Missionary Website, <https://seniormissionary.churchofjesuschrist.org>.

called over groups of stakes (one or more “coordinating councils”²) to assist, encourage, and facilitate the calling and service of senior Church members as missionaries. Senior Missionary Coordinators coordinate Senior Service Missionaries’ assignments with Bishops, Stake Presidents, and the Operation Managers. The names of the Senior Missionary Coordinators for the North American Southwest Area are found at <https://seniormission.org/smc-nasw/>. They are supported by Service Mission Office Support Advisers and the Service Mission Office (SMO) of the Church.

B. Application for a Recommendation to Serve a Mission

B.1. Generally. A missionary is recommended by his or her Bishop and Stake President, and the process begins with an application for that recommendation. Regardless of the type of service for seniors, missionary service begins with a member’s desire to serve, and a member need not wait for an invitation from a priesthood leader to initiate a missionary application. Missionary opportunities can be explored on the Church’s official senior missionary website. [See paragraph A.5(a).]

B.2. Senior Missionaries. For full-time Senior Missionaries, the missionary recommendation process is usually initiated with a member’s Bishop, but full-time missionary opportunities can be explored on the senior missionary website, and preferences can be submitted online. Senior Missionaries serve full time from 6 to 24 months.

B.3. Senior Service Missionaries. For part-time, Senior Service Missionaries, the senior missionary website is the best place to both search for an opportunity and to initiate the application process. Senior Service Missionaries serve from 8 to 20 hours a week for 6 to 24 months.

C. Roles of Priesthood Leaders. The Bishop and the Stake President interview all missionaries. All missionaries must be Temple worthy. The Stake President must approve both the calling as a Senior Missionary or Senior Service Missionary (in MRS) and the specific assignment of a Senior Service Missionary (in SMMS). The Stake President also approves early releases and mission extensions of Senior Service Missionaries.

D. Stake Senior Missionary Support. Stake Presidents can share with others the responsibility of encouraging seniors to serve missions and the work of facilitating and coordinating the assignments of Senior Service Missionaries. Ideally, each stake should call one or more Stake Senior Missionary Specialists (often a married couple). In the alternative, the Stake President may assign one or more other persons else to provide support relating to the service of seniors as missionaries. Such additional support might be given by:

- A High Councilor;
- The Stake Executive Secretary;
- The Stake Clerk; and/or
- A Counselor in the Stake Presidency.

D.1. Duties. The Stake Senior Missionary Specialists and/or others with

² See General Handbook 5.2.4.

supporting roles might be given the responsibility to:

- (a) Encourage potential senior missionaries to serve and help them navigate <https://seniormissionary.churchofjesuschrist.org> to look for and apply for missionary opportunities that are appropriate for their skillset, interests, and availability.
- (b) Help the Elders Quorum Presidents, Relief Society Presidents, and Ward Mission Leaders encourage seniors to serve as missionaries. This can be done in many ways, including teaching fifth-Sunday lessons, speaking in Sacrament Meetings, hosting devotionals or firesides, and/or making brief presentations in Stake and Ward Council meetings.
- (c) Share information that they receive about missionary opportunities with the wards and branches.
- (d) Monitor the Senior Missionary Management System (SMMS) website to help keep the Stake President (and anyone else he delegates authority to) apprised of actions that need to be taken with respect to the approval of callings or modification of callings of Senior Service Missionaries.
- (e) Communicate with the Senior Service Missionaries who are serving from the stake to make sure their needs are being met, and possibly host an annual gathering of Senior Service Missionaries under the direction of the Stake President.

E. Resources for Stake Senior Missionary Specialists. There are several resources for Stake Senior Missionary Specialists and others with supporting roles.

E.1. SMCs. Senior Missionary Coordinators (SMCs) are called to be responsible for a “group” consisting of multiple stakes. The North America Southwest Area has 10 couples that serve as SMCs over missionary groups that cover parts of Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

E.2. Written Materials. The SMCs can provide passalong cards and other materials to Stake Senior Missionary Specialists and others, including information that might be shared in classes and other gatherings or placed on ward bulletin boards.

E.3. SMW; Other Websites

(a) The Senior Missionary Website [A.5(a)] includes helpful materials Stake Senior Missionary Specialists and others can use to encourage senior missionary work. To access those materials, click “Help” and then “Training”.³ This page includes inspirational videos, as well as presentations and outlines that can be used in various settings.

(b) Stake Senior Missionary Specialists and others with senior-mission-supporting roles should review and become familiar with the materials found on: <https://seniormission.org>⁵, (which includes helpful navigation tips

³ <https://seniormissionary.churchofjesuschrist.org/srsite/help/training-brightspot?lang=eng>

⁵ The seniormission.org website is not an official website of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

and motivational videos for senior missionary candidates); and <https://seniormission.org/leaders/> (which provides helpful materials for Bishops, Stake Presidents, and Operation Managers).

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